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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2850
INFO RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE
RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO CITY 0625
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 5201
RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 9183
RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 3907
RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA 1542
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA 6239
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 7709
RUEHKSO/AMCONSUL SAPPORO 4440
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 3524
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 001072

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AMGT, MG, EAGR, JA
SUBJECT: MGSF01 May 11 UPDATE ON JAPAN'S RESPONSE TO H1N1 OUTBREAK

REF: TOKYO 1057 and previous

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This Message is Sensitive but Unclassified. Please handle accordingly.

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Four human cases of Type A H1N1 influenza have been confirmed in Japan. All four were among a Japanese school group that arrived at Narita Airport on a flight May 8 from Detroit following a school trip to Canada; and are being treated in isolation at medical facilities near Narita Airport. Eight Americans are among 48 other passengers from the flight who are being held in isolation for ten days at an airport hotel. Four additional American passengers submitted to voluntary confinement at their Kyoto hotel after local officials determined they had been seated near an affected passenger on the May 8 flight. The Embassy has contacted several of the Americans held in isolation and confirmed they are able to communicate with outside contacts and have Embassy contact information should they require further assistance. United States Forces Japan and the Embassy have established lines of communication with the Foreign and Health Ministries regarding H1N1 virus sample testing and the tracking of those SOFA status personnel subject to health monitoring or isolation. The GOJ contacted the Embassy May 11 regarding a U.S. service member who was seated on a flight to Narita Airport near a Chinese national who later tested positive in China for the H1N1 virus. There are reports of local governments and private companies limiting access to facilities for individuals who have recently arrived from the U.S., Canada, or Mexico due to H1N1 concerns. End Summary.

¶2. (U) As of May 11, 2009 1700 local time, four human cases of the novel Type A H1N1 influenza have been confirmed in Japan.

¶3. (SBU) Two Japanese students and a teacher traveling home from Oakville, Ontario with an Osaka school group tested positive for H1N1 influenza May 9 after arriving at Narita Airport from Detroit on a Northwest Airlines flight May 8. A fourth passenger who showed no flu symptoms upon arrival, but was held for observation by quarantine officials and later reported symptoms, tested positive for the H1N1 virus May 11, according to press reports. All four passengers are being treated at medical facilities near Narita Airport. Health Ministry officials said May 9 that 48 other passengers on the flight, including the students and teachers in the school group and 14 other passengers and crew, will be held in isolation for ten days at a Narita hotel while their health is monitored for flu symptoms. Local health clinics will contact and conduct follow up checks on all other passengers who remained in Japan. Media reported 193 of the 409 passengers and crew members on the flight transferred Narita Airport for foreign destinations.

¶4. (SBU) Health Ministry officials notified emboffs May 9 that eight Americans, who were seated within two meters of the affected passengers, are among the 48 passengers who will be held in isolation for the ten day monitoring period. Two active-duty military service members are among the Americans held. The Embassy contacted one of the Americans held in quarantine May 10 and two others on May 11 and confirmed they are able to call family and outside contacts, as well as the Embassy should they require further assistance. The Americans said Northwest Airlines is paying for their telephone calls up to 100 dollars per day.

¶5. (SBU) According to the Kyoto City Health and Welfare Bureau, 13 Americans who were passengers on the May 8 Northwest flight voluntarily agreed to remain confined to their Kyoto hotel rooms May 10 while city officials determined how closely they were seated to

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affected passengers. Among the Americans were 11 university students and a professor scheduled to tour Kyoto and Nara and then return to the U.S. May 21. Kyoto City officials told Consulate Osaka Officers May 11 that they had asked four members of the university group to remain in confinement for the remainder of the ten day monitoring period until May 18. (Note: Health Ministry officials told emboffs May 11 that, according to Japan's quarantine law, GOJ border officials are authorized to detain suspected H1N1 cases upon arrival in Japan, but local governments must rely on voluntary or cooperative detention for individuals who have already entered Japan. End Note.) City officials said May 11 that the other nine Americans were free to leave confinement. Officials said the confined Americans were able to communicate with family and friends and have contact information for Consulate Osaka should they need further assistance.

¶6. (SBU) Emboffs met May 11 with U.S. Forces Japan medical officers and officials from the Health and Foreign Ministries to establish lines of communication for notification of suspected H1N1 cases on U.S. bases and virus sample testing at GOJ and local laboratories. Health Ministry officials said local government health research centers have the capability and primary responsibility to test samples for the H1N1 virus. Japan's National Institute of Infectious Diseases (NIID) will receive virus samples simultaneously, but will only test samples if the results from local labs are inconclusive. The NIID officials said the institute is focusing maximum resources on developing an H1N1 vaccine. Health Ministry officials emphasized that local governments are also responsible for monitoring the health of individuals who arrive from the U.S., Canada, and Mexico for a ten day period and for tracking down those who require isolation. GOJ officials said they will notify the Embassy about SOFA status individuals who arrive at civilian airports on flights with possible H1N1 cases. Officials did so later May 11 regarding a U.S. service member who arrived at Narita Airport after being seated next to a Chinese national who later tested positive in China as China's first confirmed H1N1 case.

¶7. (SBU) Two American professors from California told Consulate Osaka officers that Sakai City officials had asked them not to come for their scheduled meetings at Sakai City Hall, as the building was

not accepting visitors from the US, Canada and Mexico due to H1N1 Influenza concerns. The professors said the city decided to send representatives to meet with the professors at their hotel. A recently returned participant in State's International Visitor Program was told by his employer, the company that operates Kansai International Airport, to remain at home for ten days due to concerns of H1N1 influenza. Mission has no information, however, to suggest that these are anything but isolated cases.

ZUMWALT